In the Claims

Claim 10. (previously amended): A method, comprising the steps of:

provided a unitary storage medium;

storing audio-centered information on the unitary storage medium;

storing on the unitary storage medium, a Table-of-Contents (TOC) access mechanism specifying an actual configuration of various audio items on the medium, a highest level TOC file that points to the audio items, and a lowest level TOC file that points immediately to the respective contents of the audio items; and

storing on the unitary storage medium, a file-based access mechanism including a root directory containing item localizing information, the root directory containing the highest level TOC file, wherein the audio information is accessible using either the TOC access mechanism or the file-based access mechanism.

Claim 11. (previously amended): The method of claim 10, wherein the root directory contains lower level directories that each pertain to a standardized audio format, thereby providing further access to the audio information at respective different levels.

Claim 12. (previously amended): The method of claim 10, wherein the root directory contains one or more Sub-TOC file different respective

Claim 13. (previously amended): The method of claim 12, wherein the number of Sub-TOC file directories is exactly equal to 2.

Claim 14. (previously amended): The method of claim 12, wherein the respective audio formats include at least a stereo format and at least a multi-channel audio format.

Claim 15. (previously amended): A unitary storage medium, comprising:

audio-centered information;

a Table-of-Contents (TOC) access mechanism specifying an actual configuration of various audio items on the medium, a highest level TOC file that points to the audio items, and a lowest level TOC file that points immediately to the respective contents of the audio items; and

a file-based access mechanism including a root directory containing item localizing information, the root directory containing the highest level TOC file, wherein the audio information is accessible using either the TOC access mechanism or the file-based access mechanism.

Claim 16. (previously amended): The unitary storage medium of claim 15, wherein:

the root directory contains one or more Sub-TOC file directories that each contain their own Sub-TOC file;

each directory uses a different respective standardized audio format; and

the respective audio formats include at least a stereo format and at last a multi-channel audio format.

Claim 17. (currently amended): A reader for an optical disc, comprising:

optical reading means for producing a read signal from the optical disc;

disc driving means for moving the optical read means with respect to a track on the optical disc; and

access means for controlling the disc drive means for accessing information stored on the optical disc using access mechanisms of the disc, the access mechanisms including:

a Table-of-Contents (TOC) access mechanism specifying an actual configuration of various audio items on the medium <u>having a highest level TOC file pointing to audio items and a lowest level TOC file pointing immediately to respective contents of the audio items,</u>

a file-based access mechanism including a root directory containing item localizing information such that the root directory contains the highest level TOC file, ~~a highest level TOC file that points to the audio items, and a lowest level TOC file that points immediately to the respective contents of the audio items,~~

wherein the audio information is accessible using either the TOC access mechanism or the file-based access mechanism.

Claim 18. (currently amended): A method, comprising:

providing a unitary storage medium; storing audio information on the unitary storage medium;

storing audio information on the unitary storage medium; and.

forming a file-based access mechanism capable of accessing audio information on the unitary storage medium, and forming ~~wherein the file-based access mechanism includes~~ a Table-of-Contents (TOC) mechanism for storing and accessing the audio information, wherein the TOC mechanism can access audio information in parallel and alternatively to the file based access mechanism.

Claim 19. (previously added): The method of claim 18, wherein the file-based access mechanism includes a root directory.

Claim 20. (previously added): The method of claim 19, wherein the root directory contains lower level directories that each pertain to a standardized audio format, thereby providing further access to the audio information at respective different levels.

Claim 21. (previously added): The method of claim 19, wherein the root directory contains one or more Sub-TOC file directories that each contain their own Sub-TOC file, each directory using a different respective standardized audio format.

Claim 22. (previously amended): The method of claim 19, wherein the TOC mechanism includes a data-based TOC for storing and accessing the audio information.

Claim 23. (previously added): The method of claim 22, wherein the TOC mechanism and the file-based access mechanism are stored on a single serial track of the unitary storage medium.

Claim 24. (currently amended): A unitary storage medium on which audio information is stored ~~unitary medium~~ comprising a file-based access mechanism capable of accessing audio information and ~~that includes~~ a Table-of-Contents (TOC) mechanism for storing and accessing the audio information, wherein the TOC mechanism can access audio information in parallel and alternatively to the file based access mechanism.

Claim 25. (previously added): The unitary storage medium of claim 24, wherein the file-based access mechanism includes a root directory.

Claim 26. (previously added): The unitary storage medium of claim 25, wherein the root directory contains lower level directories that each pertain to a standardized audio format, thereby providing further access to the audio information at respective different levels.

Claim 27. (previously added): The unitary storage medium of claim 25, wherein the root directory contains one or more Sub-TOC file directories that each contain their own Sub-TOC file, each directory using a different respective standardized audio format.

Claim 28. (previously amended): The unitary storage medium of claim 25, wherein the TOC mechanism includes a data-based TOC for storing and accessing the audio information.

Claim 29. (previously added): The unitary storage medium of claim 28, wherein the TOC mechanism and the file-based access mechanism are stored on a single serial track of the unitary storage medium.

Claim 30 (new): The method of claim 10 wherein the TOC mechanism is a single level mechanism and the lowest level TOC is the highest level TOC.